

As it is very much the Parliaments honour, so we account it no lesse our happinesse, that the doors of our grievances, as for the present we do, or for the future may suspect to suffer under. And as for the tender our hearty and thankfull acknowledgements, for that returne for the present we received by the shall suddenly finde our hopes crowned with such further answer, as the merits of so just and honest a Paper, put in by Sir William Killigrew, miscalling our humble and modest Addresses, Clamours, our A whom he expects to finde favour or Authority.

A Paper delivered and disperfed by Sir VWilliam Killigrew.

I. **B**Y reason of the many greater affairs in Parliament, the Bill for perfecting the Earle of Lindseys Fens, hath not yet found a time to be read: by which unhappy delay the season of this year is neer spent for works of this nature; and if the work begin not till next Summer, the profit of that yeer must be also lost. By this unhappy delay also new obstructions are now raised against this publick work; For I am credibly informed by severall persons of quality, that the people have been lately invited and incouraged at Boston to come up in great numbers to make new clamours, by telling them that they have a good cause, and but few friends in Parliament; that three or foure onely spoke for them; that when the Vote passed, but thirteen were for the Country, and twenty seven against them; that their Fens would be lost unlesse they did come generally up to petition; and if that failed, then they should bring up their wives and children to the Parliament doore, and there leave them.

I I. I do conceive, by these invitations and incouragements, many poore ignorant people are perswaded to signe Petitions they understand not, and may be did never see. And to make the noise and clamour greater, many rich men of Boston, with others bordering on the eight hundred Fens, are now come up (who would have no draining, that so themselves with their great stocks may still continue to eat out the poor Commoners, and do therefore well to declare in their last Friday books, that the poor Commoners have no interest in the Fens, but by their Landlords right: which is a pretty preamble to rob the poor people of their Commons, in case their designe should follow of inclosing all the Commons.) These men also are now come up to petition against the Drainers, in hope to stay the Act from passing, thereby to keep the said eight hundred Fens from being drained, and thereby to defraud the State of eight thousand Acres in that Fens belonging to the late King, as Lord of the Soyle, and Drainer of the said Fen.

III. I shall not trouble my self to answer their railing books given abroad on Friday last, because the substance of the same books hath by them been published long since, and long since fully answered by books of mine: nor much value what their Petition or themselves can say after so many yeers hearing, and such full debates at so great a Committee, where all the House had Voices; and after a Bill ordered by this honourable House to be brought in to perfect the said draining: for I do humbly conceive, there being no new act done by the Drainers, these mens repetition of old clamours fully answered, can signifie nothing but some few mens endeavours to delay the Act, in hope to starve the Drainers while the cause depends; filling mens ears with terrours of the peoples discontent, as if two or three hundred Rotters, with their Abettors, signing a Petition, or as many rich mens coming up with a Petition were the voice of the whole people of *Lincolnsire*! and as if all *England* did desire the Fens should not be drained! when as most of this Nation do wonder that any should oppose so generall a good.

IV. I do glory in my part of the merit of this work, because I may safely say that no work of this nature was ever carried on with a more generall consent, and applause of the most eminent Lords, Owners, and Commoners of the Country; or with more equity pursued, or lesse prejudice to any man, or hath produced a greater improvement (I mean proportionable to its quantity) nor hath any such work been brought to a greater perfection. In consideration whereof, I cannot apprehend that the whole Land shall be taken from us; but my fears are, lest some artificiall delays, or prejudiciall accommodation be found to bring us to ruine, to wit, by recompensing our charge, hazard, and losses, which the whole twenty foure thousand Acres will not now do, nor can the Country ever perform it by a sum of money, though they and we should agree to it. My onely hope is, that the Parliament will think it just and honourable to settle us by the same like Act with *Bedford-Levell*, having the same title and merit. In which Act there are provisos to meet with, and prevent all mischiefs and Inconveniencies which have, or may happen to any person concerned in this work of draining. It is therefore a vain thing by Petitions to anticipate the intentions of the Parliament, who intend so much their good, if *Lindsey-Levell* be established by the like Act with *Bedford-Levell*; the profit of these works being done, will encourage the draining of all the Fens in *England*, as a high improvement to the publick good of this Nation, and therefore worthy of the Parliaments protection; for which there are arguments enough to convince any opinions to the contrary.

1 June, 1651.

William Killigrew.

doors thereof stands so freely open, wherein we may present our desires, as also acquaint it with such fears and
for the full discovery of both, we have presented our severall Petitions, so we think our selves in duty obliged to
by the mouths of those two worthy Gentlemen Sir Henry Vane and Col. Lister. Not doubting but that we
est a cause deserves. In the mean time, we cannot but to our great regret take notice of a false and scandalous
our Appearances Riots. A strange mistaken confidence, so jolly endeavouring to abuse their credulity, from

A Reply to Sir William Killigrews dispersed Papers, by the Owners and Commoners in Lincolnshire.



To the first. We are civilly sensible of the Parliaments affairs, as appeared by the manner of our petitioning: We conceive there cannot be a time found to settle the Fens in the Earle of *Lindsey*, who petitions not for them, nor in Sir William Killigrew, who hath not produced to the Committee any Deed or Conveyance, whereby to derive a Title to himself. We may complain of unhappinesse, who have been delayed and interrupted in our Drainings these sixty yeeres by Court-Undertakers: We cannot be called obstructors of a Bill, that petitions for one. If it was good manners for us to print what we heare and are credibly informed, we could tell to whom Sir Thomas Dawes is indebted, and to whom Sir William Killigrew is engaged; and that our Lands must discharge those debts and engagements; and who are interessed in other Undertakings. But to avoid calumination, we will hold our babbles; persons of quality are feldome tatlers. To invite and encourage people in a good cause, is noble, honest, and commendable: humbly to petition, cannot be called clamour by a tongue well guided. We cannot learn of any Votes that passed against us, neither can we believe it, nor that any of this Parliament is against us, who was so much for them; nor that the Fens can be lost, if kept out of the hands of Parliament-destroyers. We shall never be so uncivill or unnaturall, as to leave our wives and children at the Parliaments doore: nor can we imagine that ever any thing will come from thence, to cause them to beg at other mens doors.

To the second. Sir William knows the poore need no invitations; it was they onely who were found guilty, and punished for pulling down their houses, &c. as appears by severall Indictments, when Sir Williams friends and sharers was by Court power made high Sheriff and Justices of the peace, and Parliament men put out. Had Sir Williams charity sooner appeared, it might have been better for him and us. He argues Leveller like, to gain the poore by telling them that is theirs they have no propriety in, for all Lawyers will tell him, right of common belongs to the lands and houses of men, and not to their persons; and such poore as have land or cottage, hath as good right of Commons, as he that hath a hundred acres. We are as willing our Common should be stinted and enjoyed in common, if so thought fit, as any poor man can desire it, practise that onely, and condemn us if we oppose it. When Sir Williams power prevailed, it is well known how the poore was oppressed; so that his charity and arguments are but self-ends. He saith the rich men of *Boston* eat up the Common with great stocks, and so he saith of the rest of the Towns, which great stock those Fens ever maintained before Sir William knew the Country, and is an argument the Fens are not at all hurtfully surrounded grounds, and needs draining, since they bear such great stocks. He saith the Commoners would defraud the State of eight thousand acres in the eight hundred Fenne: It is he that would defraud the State, by inviting them to own what was condemned in the King; and so metamorphize a dear-bought-Common wealth into a Kingdome again. He knows the King, when Court-power ruled, having no Title, could never out the Commoners, though he perplexed them with long and tedious suits in the Court of Exchequer, where he was cast, and the Commoners possessions never interrupted.

To the third. We say, it is great discretion in Sir William not to reply to books, he is so unable to answer. But we much value, that after a cause so fully heard in Parliament, as to be remonstrated a grievance, it should now be a question, whether the grievors should be recompenced or not. What our petitions or repetitions signifie, we must leave to the judgement of the Readers, who will soberly determine who is most clamorous. He saith it is but some few men that oppose him: We will joine issue with him there, if he can either of persons or hands procure foure in ten, of rightfull Owners and Commoners, we will cease in oppoling him. Sir William much insisteth upon the Act or Bill that is ordered by the House to be brought in by *Jo: Gooding Esq;* a Member thereof, as if it was either made by or with his and his sharers privy; for he saith the delay of it will starve them (it is better starving ten then ten thousand.) But we cannot but imagine he abuseth that worthy Member, in fomenting cause of jealousy, being well assured the House ordered no compliance more with them then us. Sure we are, we have had no insight or privy at all to the Bill, and why they should wonder. It is strange that one who hath received so much mercy, should be still so foul-mouthed, as to call humble Petitioners rioters and abettors. He falsely accuseth us for rioters, and yet invites us to be so, in excepting against many rich men, being trusted to represent the grievances of thousands, as if it was fit to trouble the Parliament with multitudes. But as before, if Sir William can procure the greater number, we will be silent. We know none in *England* that opposeth drainings, neither do we believe any in *England* think us such fools or mad men, that we need Guardians for our estates. We are persuaded few of the Nation knows how we have been abused by Court-Undertakers; if they did, they would wonder such propriety-destroyers should go unpunished.

To the fourth. We are sorry to heare Sir William glory in oppression, our imprisonments, fining, selling our cattell without any account making, taking our Land against our consents, and commanding Commissioners by the Kings letters, deserves little applause, and expresseth lesse equity. Produce the consent gained of the greatest part of the eminentest Lords, Owners, and Commoners, otherwaies then by force, and we will acquiesce. As for the improvement made, we shall submit to the view of indifferent honest Gentlemen, who may judge by the soyle turned up, what was the former condition of the Fens. Sir William argues much for Recompence (we can easily prove a good recompence he hath received) for our parts, we have more cause to expect it, many of the Commoners having lost their lives and estates in the Parliaments service, by the violence of Sir William and his participants; which blood was of greater value then any estate Sir William ever had. If we be unable to satisfie his pretended estate, he is far more unable to answer for our blood and estates, he and his participants in the late war so lavishly shed and spoyled. In the pardon of his violence done to the five Members, and his hostility to the Parliament, he hath received more then ever we did for our lives and estates we lost and hazarded. What *Bedford Act* is, concerns not us, their convenience and inconveniences may not be the same with ours. It is high presumption for such an offender as Sir William hath been, to say its vain to petition a Parliament. Could his bribes prevail there, as they did at Court, he would anticipate the justice thereof, and divide betwixt them and the people; the which we hope providence (that in our extremity raised us a Parliament) will prevent. In a late paper Sir William boasteth of 78 Commissioners that did act for him. Its well known how unwilling they were to act, untill they were commanded by the Kings letters. Again, those Gentlemen were not actors in that which was the root of the evil; for the view of what grounds was hurtfully surrounded betwixt *Bourne* and *Kime Eae*, was taken onely by Undertakers and Sharers, viz. the Earle of *Lindsey*, the Lord *Willoughby* his son, Sir *Edward Heron*, Sir *John Brooks*, *William Langton*, and *Robert Long*, Esq; these being for themselves, were tempted with that sin of covetousnesse (yet unreformed) and certified that all was hurtfully surrounded; the other Gentlemen not privie to the deligae, being commanded by the Kings letters to proceed accordingly; and did, untill they understood the evil of that deligae, and then they endeavoured to oppose it. But when the Undertakers perceived their dislike of the proceedings, they put out of commission of Sewers those Gentlemen, of which number Sir William Armin and Mr. Lister were two; and neither of them viewed the Fens now in question. We wonder Sir William Killigrew should so unworthily charge Sir William Armin, that worthy deceased Member, as a Viewer, who cleared his innocency of that act before the Committee of the Fens. Though what he said, and what Sir *Anthoni Irby* testified before the Committee, what Fens he and others meant, when they writ to the King for an Undertaker, be left out of the depositions, yet many worthy Members and Gentlemen standing by remembers it. Sir *Anthoni Irby* being still living, we desire he may again, if occasion requires it, declare himself; he formerly testified, that it was not meant the Fens between *Bourne* and *Kime Eae*.